



Lesson Plan

Lesson Title: A Thousand Cranes

Lesson Overview/Theme: The focus of this lesson is to prepare students for the viewing of *A Thousand Cranes* presented by Childsplay and practice the implementation of creative drama strategies. Drama activities may inspire expressive writing in the form of a friendly letter written from the point of view of a character.

WESD 4th grade teachers participating in the Childsplay – WESD Collaboration project will see the touring production of *A Thousand Cranes* by Kathryn Schultz Miller at your school. See the Master Calendar located in the front of the Arts in Education 2007-2008 white notebook for the specific date the show will be presented at your school. Record the date below.

Childsplay's *A Thousand Cranes* performance scheduled on:

Background: *A Thousand Cranes* is based on the true story of Sadako Sasaki who was born in Hiroshima, Japan, in 1943, during World War II. She was two years old when the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, August 6, 1945. As she grew up, Sadako was a strong, courageous and athletic girl. In 1955, at age 11, while practicing for a big race, she became dizzy and fell to the ground. Sadako was diagnosed with the leukemia caused by radiation. The people in Japan call it "the atom bomb" disease. □Sadako's best friend Kenji told her of an old Japanese legend, which said that, anyone who folds a thousand paper cranes would be granted a wish. Sadako hoped that the gods would grant her a wish to get well so that she could run again. She started to work on the paper cranes, but her wish did not come true. She died on October 25, 1955, at the age of twelve. Inspired by her courage and strength, Sadako's friends and classmates put together a book of her letters and published it. They began to dream of building a monument to Sadako and all of the children killed by the atom bomb. Young people all over Japan helped collect money for the project. In 1958, a statue of Sadako holding a golden crane was unveiled in Hiroshima Peace Park. The children also made a wish, which is inscribed, at the bottom of the statue and reads: "**This is our cry, This is our prayer, Peace in the world**".

This lesson may be linked to the following Arizona Academic Content Standards:

Arizona Academic Standards: Grade 4

Dance

Strand 1: Create

PO 102: Anatomy – perform isolated and coordinated dance movement for the head, neck, joints, and body parts of the torso and limbs

PO 204: Apply fundamental movement patterns to warm ups and improvisation.

Theatre

Strand 1: Create

Concept 2: Acting

PO 101: Imagine and describe characters, their relationships, what they want and why, through various movements and gestures

Strand 2: Relate

Concept 2: Acting

PO 101: Describe how the characters in a situation might be similar to or different from a real life experience

Writing

Strand 4: Writing Process

Concept1: Prewriting

PO 1: Generate ideas through drama

Strand 2: Writing Elements

Concept 4: Word Choice

PO 2: Use descriptive words and phrases that energize the writing

Strand 3: Writing Applications

Concept 1: Expressive

PO 1: Write a narrative based on an imagined event



Childsplay
Washington Elementary School District
ASU/Arizona Prevention Resource Center
United States Department of Education
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For a detailed description of the plot of the play and other activities related to the play, visit the website of Childsplay at <childsplayaz.org> Under the "For Teachers" tab, click on "Preview and Study Guides."

Classroom Teacher: WESD 4th Grade Teachers

Teaching Artists: Drew Chappell ,Lisé Kloeppel, Barbara Jo Maier, Alison Marshall

Lesson Session: Team Teaching – Teaching Artist and 4th Grade Teacher

Length of Lesson: 45 minutes

Lesson Plan Author: Barbara Jo Maier

Instructional Objectives:
Students will:

- Review axial and locomotor movements through physical warm ups
- Explore movement concepts of space, scale, shape and weight
- Create frozen frames depicting situations from the life story of Sadako
- Explore character relationships through pantomime
- Pantomime characters, then freeze in tableau, sharing words or phrases when spotlighted
- Draft a friendly letter from the point of view of Sadako, Kenji, Grandmother Oba Chan or Sadako's mother or father



Instructional Plan

Introduction:

Topic introduction, review of previously learned material, lesson connections, generating interest

This is a team taught lesson in which the WESD 4th grade teacher and the Childsplay Teaching Artist will share instructional tasks throughout the implementation of this lesson. The warm ups are a review of movement introduced to 4th grade teachers at the Summer Institute. The creation of frozen frames / tableaux is a review of drama strategies introduced at the Summer Institute. The pantomime activity is a continuation of work from the previous lesson based on *The Three Javelinas*. The play, *A Thousand Cranes*, explores specific moments in Sadako's life in a non-linear chronology using metaphor, music and masks. The play is not a reenactment of the book, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Elanor Coerr. This lesson will explore characters in depth. It may be taught to students who have or have not read the book. Blank spaces precede or follow each activity title. Teachers and Teaching Artists may record who leads the action / gives direction in these spaces.

Setting the Stage (Warm Up):

Sitting Shapes / Move to a Standing Shape on 8 _____

The intent of a warm up is to gently exercise the instrument (the body) and the thinking tools (the mind).

"Today we are going to explore characters from a play we will see soon. To use our imaginations, we must first warm up our bodies. Notice the shape you are sitting in. Is it closed? Open? Angular? Rounded? On the count of three, change shapes. 1-2-3."

Students then change from the shape they are sitting in to a new sitting shape. Repeat. Next ask students to rise on the count of "1" from their low level sitting shapes to a high level standing shape by the count of "8." Students change shape on each count, moving through 8 distinct shapes from sitting to standing. Can repeat by starting from sitting or in reverse, go by if students are again seated.

Stretch like a growing tree

Stretches are used to extend, reach, lengthen, and open the space in the body gradually increasing range of motion.

_____ "Stand. Reach, lengthening your arms up overhead, moving from side to side, alternating sides, 1,2,3,4, reaching up, 1,2,3,4. Imagine you are a tree growing. Without letting your feet leave the floor, try to have your fingers touch the opposite wall. Now imagine a monkey bar you would see on the playground and try to reach for it without letting your feet leave the ground."

Curl Down Like a Puppet

_____ "Now, imagine you are a marionette puppet like Pinocchio. Let your hands relax. Let your arms relax from the elbows down. Head. Upper body. Drop down from the waist. Shake your head "yes", shake it "no." Ever so slowly roll up on a 4 count when your head coming up last. "

Draw circles with your body

_____ "Roll your head forward, gently. Then rotate around, keeping the muscles in your neck relaxed." Continue with rolling shoulders (forward and backward), wrists, ankles, hips, knees.

Shake

_____ "Shake out your hands, wrists, elbows, shoulders, ankles, knees, hips, torso, neck, head – shake down (several counts), shake up, shake slowly, widely, and then rest"

X-Shape

_____ "Open into a large standing X, arms reaching up, head looking up, legs grounded."

Swing

_____ "Standing in place, move softly, knees bent, lifting arms moving forward to back, three counts up, three counts back."



Sidecoaching

"Let your actions make it clear the specific thing you are doing. If you are holding a teacup, how heavy is it? How do you snip your child's hair, Father?"

Stop Action Technique:

Occasionally freeze the pantomime to focus in on an individual. (you may use whatever control device works best; flashing the lights, ringing a bell or shaking a tambourine, etc) Tell them to maintain their pose as we observe and analyze it. Use this opportunity to reflect on what physical choices and facial expressions tell us about a character. Allow a couple of different students to share each time you stop.

Sequence of Specific Activities:

Drama Strategy: Pantomime ending with Tableau and Spotlighting

"Now that our bodies are warmed up, our minds will work better. Next we are going to explore the life of a Japanese girl who lived in a city called Hiroshima. Each of you will get a chance to participate. I would like to invite 4-5 volunteers to come forward. You are going to become members of a family living in Hiroshima, Japan. It is an important day in history, August 6, 1945. Please come forward and let me tell you a little about them. Then I would like you to pantomime what you think your character is doing this morning, August 6th. You will act out this scene without words, only gestures.

Frame 1: August 6, 1945 _____

Characters:

1. Grandmother Oba chan
2. Father
3. Mother
4. Child (brother or sister, age 5)

"Grandmother is making tea." Let the actor playing this role explore what that may look like. Side coach. "Father, who works as a barber, is cutting the hair of his child." Let the actors explore what this action may be. "Mother is rocking her two year old child, Sadako. How can you show us you are holding a two-year old?" Audience members may offer suggestions to help actors make choices.

"When I say "action" let's watch the family of Sadako on this Sunday morning. When I say "FREEZE" I'd like actors to hold their positions so we, the audience can see you frozen in place."

To actors: "While you stay frozen, let me tell you what happens next. When I say, "Action" I want you to react. Think about what your character would do. Remember this is pantomime, so there are no words. Only actions / gestures."

Read quotes from the book: "There was the flash of a million suns. Then the heat prickled my eyes like needles." The noise broke people's ear drums. A bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, the town where Sadako lived. Actors, think about what your character would do. When I say "Actions" show us. And Action. And FREEZE."

Drama Strategy: Spotlighting / Word or Phrase

"Stay frozen actors. When I tap your shoulder, speak a word or phrase that expresses what your character is thinking or feeling right now, inside of the story, in Hiroshima, Japan, the moment right after a bomb was dropped on your city."

Repeat using the following frames of action calling on a new set of students for each pantomime that ends in tableau with spotlighting.



Frame 2: Launching Paper Lanterns to Remember Those Lost

Characters:

1. Sadako
2. Sister / Brother
3. Mother / Father
4. Grandmother (now a spirit)

"Sadako grows up without her grandmother who was killed the day the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Many people lost their lives that day. On a specific day each year, people in Japan remember those lost. In the next picture, we need people to play the roles of Sadako, her brother or sister, Sadako's mother and/or father and someone to play Grandmother. It is the same day in August nine years later, 1954. Sadako and her family are going to the Peace Day Ceremony. To prepare for the event, Sadako's family is making paper lanterns. On the side of each lantern people write the names of family and friends who died because of the Thunderbolt, the atom bomb. Let's watch as the family makes lanterns. Grandmother, you are no longer a living part of the family. What might you be doing? How might you move to let us know you are not part of the living?"

Let the characters make lanterns, then continue the action, suggesting to the actors, "Let's make our way down to the Ohta River where you will launch your lanterns. Light the candle inside your lantern. Lean down carefully next to the riverbank, and launch your lantern in memory of someone special. And FREEZE."

"Stay frozen actors. When I tap your shoulder, speak a word or phrase that expresses what your character is thinking or feeling right now. You have just launched your lantern."

Frame 3: The Day Sadako, the Runner, Fell

Characters:

1. Sadako
2. Chiizuko, her best friend
3. Teacher
4. Schoolmate(s)
5. (Optional: Grandmother)

"It is winter. Sadako has been running daily, in preparation for the big relay race she wants to win so badly. It is recess. She is playing with friends on the playground. Let's see characters pantomiming the action. What do teachers do on the playground? What are Sadako and her friends doing? And FREEZE. Here's what happens next. Stay frozen. When I say action, show us what your characters do. Suddenly, Sadako feels very dizzy and tired. Everything around her seems to spin and she sinks to the ground. And Action. What do Sadako's schoolmates do? What does the teacher do? And FREEZE."

"Stay frozen actors. When I tap your shoulder, speak a word or phrase that expresses what your character is thinking or feeling right now. "



Frame 4: Friendship in the Hospital

Characters:

1. Sadako
2. Kenji
3. Nurse / Doctor
4. Grandmother (in spirit)

"In this scene, Sadako is in the hospital, feeling tired, sitting in her wheel chair. A nurse is about to wheel her to a window so she can look at the sunshine. A doctor is looking at her charts, trying to figure out if Sadako is getting better. Kenji is a patient in the hospital, sitting by himself looking out the window. Let's see that scene. Pantomime coming into the room, Doctor. And nurse, wheel Sadako to the window. Kenji, how do you respond to Sadako? FREEZE. Sadako, you have made a paper crane for Kenji. When I say Action, give him the paper crane. Kenji, you have no family left, only an older aunt. This is the best gift you've received in a very long time. Show us how the crane makes you feel. And Action." And FREEZE. Repeat spotlighting asking for a word or phrase.

Frame 5: Hiroshima Peace Park Today

Characters:

1. Sadako (as a statue)
2. Grandmother (in spirit)
3. Tourist
4. Tourist

"It is many years later. We are at the Hiroshima Peace Park where a statue of Sadako is at the center of a large plaza. Sadako is reaching up high as if she is launching a golden crane. Let's put the statue in the picture. And Grandmother Oba chan. And visiting the park today are tourists. Think about why you are at the park. Why did you come to see this statue? Today people visit the statue and leave paper cranes. Let's pantomime this moment. Tourists, make your way toward the statue. Perhaps, set down the cranes you've made. While you are standing there, can you read what's written at the bottom of the statue? If not, let me read it for you:

"This is our cry, This is our prayer, Peace in the world".
Repeat spotlighting, asking for a word or phrase.

Closure:

- Once the students have returned to their seats, review the work they have done together this day.
- Review theatre performance etiquette.
- Invite students to watch for characters they portrayed today in the upcoming performance.
 - Ask the students to define pantomime and give examples of its use in today's lesson. Ask them to describe things that might cause pantomime actions to be unclear or confusing..
 - Ask them to give examples of when they worked cooperatively. Review challenges to successful cooperation.

Writing Extensions:

Different Perspectives: Write a letter in the first person, from Sadako's point of view. Perhaps it is Peace Day. Perhaps it is when she is in the hospital waiting to get better, making cranes. Who would she want to write to? Why? Make those choices clear. (writing application concept 3-functional) (Voice)